

method of tracking missing family members and reuniting them with their loved ones. I spoke to people who were desperate to learn the whereabouts of their loved ones. The pain in their voices was evident and made worse by the scarcity of available information. A number of websites, registries and other electronic bulletins have sprung up in response. CNN and other cable channels have taken on this challenge. Children are going before the cameras seeking relatives. What is the federal responsibility to ensure a comprehensive emergency database for such catastrophes?

We need to reevaluate existing emergency management practices and policies. What are the skill sets needed to assure those in charge are able to properly and aggressively manage a widespread emergency? How much can we realistically rely on the military? Can and should those capabilities be developed to a greater extent in the civilian population? Do we overextend and over depend on local responders who—by virtue of being personally affected by a cataclysmic event—are unable to provide their talents when needed?

We can, we must, and we will do everything possible to make sure our lack of preparedness and slow response to this catastrophic on-going tragedy never happens again.

#### REGARDING THE \$10.5 BILLION AID PACKAGE FOR THE VICTIMS OF HURRICANE KATRINA

#### HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 8, 2005*

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, "Four years ago this month, the City I represent fell victim to a major disaster now infamously known as 9/11. When that happened we received the world's sympathy and we expected and received the support of the federal government to help us rebuild. Last December, the world came to the aid of Southeast Asian nations when the Indian Ocean leapt upon the shores of Indonesia, Sri Lanka and other coastal nations. The world responded and the U.S. Federal government stepped up to the plate.

Once again, disaster has struck, this time in the form of hurricane Katrina. Again, thousands of people will have lost their lives and ten times that have lost their homes and livelihood. The world is offering its sympathy and support and Congress is meeting its responsibility by providing the Federal Government with \$10.5 billion in initial emergency aid. Certainly more will be needed, and more will be provided.

Additionally, I urge my fellow members of Congress to work with their local communities on neighborhood efforts to provide support for the relief efforts. As Americans we have many differences amongst us. Differences in race, religion and political ideologies to name a few. However, we have two commonalities that supercede those differences—we are all Americans and we are all human beings. As it was four years ago in my City of New York, it is today in our Gulf region. Let us respond today as we did then with overwhelming compassion and support for fellow members of our American-human family".

#### SECOND KATRINA SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

#### HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 8, 2005*

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, as we speak, rescue personnel from across the country are continuing the relief effort while ordinary citizens in cities throughout America are volunteering and giving. They are taking in those who have lost everything. Heroism is winning out. And the funding in this underlying bill will help ensure that it continues to.

But as we work to get this relief effort right, Congress should recognize how we got to this point. That starts with understanding what this Administration has done to FEMA.

Last year, former director of FEMA James Lee Witt told us, and I quote—"Scientists tell us that we are going to be seeing more catastrophic natural disaster events in the 21st Century than we've ever seen. . . . And yet we have destroyed the one agency that not only responds to those events, but also works with state and local governments to do pre-disaster mitigation prevention before that risk could ever happen, to minimize that risk."

As long as our nation gazes upon the devastation in this once-vibrant city of New Orleans, it will remain a symbol of this Administration's misplaced priorities—its misplaced values. The Obey Amendment would have gone a long way toward restoring FEMA to the efficient, non-political agency it was during emergencies like the Oklahoma City bombings in the 1990's. In doing so, we would ensure that never again in the face of a national disaster will the Federal government and the agency responsible for emergency relief fail to act or fail to lead. We owe the victims of Katrina and the heroes of this rescue effort nothing less.

#### BEATRICE AVINA: WINNER OF THE 2005 JOHNS RETIREE OF THE YEAR AWARD

#### HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 8, 2005*

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, by the time Bea began her career in 1984 with the AFL-CIO Community Services Department with United Way of San Diego County, she had already learned that families have special needs due to unexpected events and circumstances. Those things she learned while she was a member of UFIWU and Seafarers International.

Addressing those special needs gave her an advantage when chairing the Federal Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program, Catholic Charities' SDG&E Utilities Program, and working in cooperation with the San Diego Food Bank. Under her leadership, the Adopt a Family Program and the Toy & Holiday Food Drive were developed and still continue to be a success.

Bea Avina has always been dedicated to bringing her fellow brothers and sisters social and economic justice. She is a prime example of a person who always puts her neighbor's needs first.

Since retiring in December 2003, Bea has not sat idle. She currently volunteers approximately four to six days a month as a Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP) for the San Diego Police Department and remains energetic in church and family activities.

I am proud to salute Bea Avina on her recognition as the Johns Retiree of the Year.

#### HONORING MASTER SERGEANT TROY A. STEWART

#### HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 8, 2005*

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise before you today to recognize the accomplishments of an American hero, Master Sergeant Troy A. Stewart of Essexville, MI, which is in my district. On September 10, the United States Marine Corps will join family and friends to pay tribute to Master Sergeant Stewart, as he retires from active service after 20 dedicated years.

Troy Stewart was born August 29, 1966, in my hometown of Flint, MI. He enlisted in the Marine Corps on June 27, 1985, and was assigned to 29 Palms CA for Communications Center School, where he graduated as the Academic Honor Graduate. By August 1986, Private First Class Stewart was promoted to Lance Corporal, and reported to Marine Wing Communications Squadron-28, Marine Air Control Group-28, 2nd Marine Air Wing in Cherry Point, NC, where he worked as a Field Message Center Operator. Two years later, Corporal Stewart reported for duty as the Divisions Enlisted Assignments Non-Commissioned Officer at Headquarters and Service Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, in Okinawa, Japan.

In 1989, Corporal Stewart returned to the United States, stationed first at Camp Lejeune, NC, and later back at Cherry Point, where he also attended Non-Commissioned Officers School. Corporal Stewart graduated a few days before the rest of his class, due to his deployment as a Top Secret Courier with the 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade in support of Operation Ahaus Tara in Honduras. Corporal Stewart returned again after that mission, and served as SORTS Non-Commissioned Officer, Platoon Sergeant, and the Squadron's Training Non-Commissioned Officer.

From 1990 through 1993, Sergeant Stewart attended Communications Systems Chief School as well as Drill Instructors School. In July 1995, he received a Meritorious Promotion to Staff Sergeant. Following his Drill Instructor duty, he reported to Quantico, VA, where he completed Air Crew School and operated as a Marine One Communicator. In January 2002, Master Sergeant Stewart assumed the duties as the Staff Non-Commissioned Officer in charge of the Recruiting Sub-Station in Saginaw, MI, the position he holds to this day.

I would also like to acknowledge Master Sergeant Stewart's wonderful family: his wife, Corporal Kimberly Stewart, and their daughters, Desirée and Tory.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to acknowledge the life and career of Master Sergeant Troy Stewart. He has served his country with dignity and honor, and has been recognized